

## CLAIMS

I claim:

1. An annular shaft flange for attachment to a shaft extending along a longitudinal axis, the shaft flange comprising:
  - a flange body having a first end face and a second end face being parallel and opposed, the first and second end faces being spaced to define an axial  
5 width of the shaft flange;
  - an inner curved engagement surface configured to contact an outer surface of the shaft when the shaft flange is positioned along the shaft and in a closed position;
  - a first nest end and a second nest end formed on the flange body, the  
10 first and second nest ends being spaced from each other when the shaft flange is in an open position;
  - a first attachment lip extending from the first nest end and having a width of approximately one-half the axial width of the shaft flange, the first attachment lip being radially spaced from the inner engagement surface; and  
15 a second attachment lip extending from the second nest end and having a width of approximately one-half the axial width of the shaft flange, the second attachment lip being radially spaced from the inner engagement surface,
  - wherein the first attachment lip overlaps the second attachment lip when the shaft flange is in a closed position such that the first and second  
20 attachment lips can be secured to each other to retain the shaft flange in the closed position.
2. The annular shaft flange of claim 1 further comprising a rivet extending between the first attachment lip and the second attachment lip to retain the shaft flange in the closed position.

3. The annular shaft flange of claim 1 further comprising a mechanical interconnection formed between the first attachment lip and the second attachment lip to retain the shaft flange in the closed position.

4. The annular shaft flange of claim 1 wherein the shaft flange is comprised of at least one substance in the group consisting of a non-ferrous metal or a ferrous metal or a combination thereof.

5. The annular shaft flange of claim 1 wherein the inner engagement surface has an axial width greater than the axial width of the shaft flange.

6. The annular shaft flange of claim 1 further comprising a shaft engagement lip extending axially from the first end face, wherein the curved engagement surface is formed by both the shaft engagement lip and the flange body.

7. The annular shaft flange of claim 1 wherein the first attachment lip and the second attachment lip are radially spaced from and out of contact with the shaft when the annular shaft flange is in the closed position.

8. An annular shaft flange for attachment to a shaft extending along a longitudinal axis, the shaft flange comprising:

a flange body having a first end face and a second end face being parallel and opposed, the first and second end faces being spaced to define an axial width of the shaft flange;

an inner curved engagement surface configured to contact an outer surface of the shaft when the shaft flange is positioned along the shaft and in a closed position;

10 a first nest end and a second nest end formed on the flange body, the first and second nest ends being spaced from each other when the shaft flange is in an open position;

a first attachment lip extending from the first nest end and having a width of approximately one-half the axial width of the shaft flange, the first attachment lip being radially spaced from the inner engagement surface; and

15 a second attachment lip extending from the second nest end and having a width of approximately one-half the axial width of the shaft flange, the second attachment lip being radially spaced from the inner engagement surface,

wherein the first attachment lip overlaps the second attachment lip when the shaft flange is in a closed position such that the first and second  
20 attachment lips are radially spaced out of contact with the shaft and can be secured to each other such that the engagement surface retains the shaft flange along the longitudinal length of the shaft.

9. The annular shaft flange of claim 8 further comprising a rivet extending between the first attachment lip and the second attachment lip to retain the shaft flange in the closed position.

10. The annular shaft flange of claim 8 further comprising a mechanical interconnection formed between the first attachment lip and the second attachment lip to retain the shaft flange in the closed position.

11. The annular shaft flange of claim 8 further comprising a shaft engagement lip extending axially from the first end face, wherein the curved engagement surface is formed by both the shaft engagement lip and the flange body.

12. An annular shaft flange for attachment to a shaft extending along a longitudinal axis, the shaft flange comprising:

a flange body having a first end face and a second end face being parallel and opposed, the first and second end faces being spaced to define an axial width of the shaft flange;

5 an inner curved engagement surface configured to contact an outer surface of the shaft when the shaft flange is attached to the shaft;

a first end and a second end formed on the flange body, the first and second ends being spaced from each other when the shaft flange is in an open position;

10 a first attachment projection extending from the first end of the flange body in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axis of the shaft; and

a second attachment projection extending from the second end of the flange body in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axis of the shaft,

15 wherein the first attachment projection and the second attachment projection contact each other when the shaft flange is in the closed position;

wherein when the flange body is in the closed position, the first attachment projection can be attached to the second attachment projection to retain the shaft flange in the closed position.

13. The annular shaft flange of claim 12 further comprising a shaft engagement lip extending axially from the first end face of the flange body, wherein the curved engagement surface is formed by both the shaft engagement lip and the flange body.

14. The annular shaft flange of claim 13 wherein the shaft engagement lip is integrally formed with both the first attachment projection and the second attachment projection.

15. The annular shaft flange of claim 14 further comprising a rivet extending between the first attachment projection and the second attachment

projection, wherein the rivet extends perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the shaft.

16. The annular shaft flange of claim 12 wherein the flange body is a one-piece member includes a hinge formed opposite the first and second ends of the flange body.